

ASIAN SURVEY

Acc. No. 310

Editors: ROBERT A. SCALAPINO and LEO E. ROSE

Editorial Assistant: Rose Anne White

ASIAN SURVEY (ISSN 0004-4687) is published monthly for the subscription rates given below by the University of California Press, Berkeley, California 94720. Second-class postage paid at Berkeley, California and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Asian Survey*, University of California Press, Berkeley, California 94720.

Articles in ASIAN SURVEY do not necessarily represent the views of the editors or the University of California. Although the editors are responsible for their selection and acceptance, responsibility for the opinions expressed and for the accuracy of statements contained in articles rests with their authors.

Correspondence on editorial, advertising or other matters may be sent to: ASIAN SURVEY, University of California Press, Berkeley, California 94720.

Copying notice: The appearance of the code at the bottom of the first page of an article in this journal indicates the copyright owner's consent that copies of the article may be made for personal or internal use, or for the personal or internal use of specific clients. This consent is given on the condition, however, that the copier pay the stated per-copy fee through the *Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.*, 310 Madison Avenue, New York, NY, 10017, for copying beyond that permitted by Sections 107 or 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law. This consent does not extend to other kinds of copying, such as copying for general distribution, for advertising or promotional purposes, for creating new collective works, or for resale.

Subscriptions: In the U.S., \$20.00 a year and \$38.00 for two years for individuals; \$28.00 a year and \$52.00 for two years for institutions; subscribers elsewhere should add \$1.80 per year. Special rate for students: \$12.00 a year in the U.S.; \$13.80 elsewhere. Single issues: \$3.00 for individuals, institutions, and students in the U.S.; \$3.50 elsewhere; back issues are \$1.00 additional.

© 1980 by The Regents of the University of California.

Printed in U.S.A.

ASI SUR

A Monthly Review

March 1980, Volume
University of Californi

Eden Naby

Hans H. Baerwald

Rodney W. Jones

Raju G. C. Thomas

Francis J. Romance

Sidney R. Jones

Leon Hollerman

ASIAN SURVEY

A Monthly Review of Contemporary Asian Affairs

March 1980, Volume XX, Number 3
University of California Press

Eden Naby	The Ethnic Factor in Soviet-Afghan Relations	237
Hans H. Baerwald	Japan's 35th House of Representatives Election: The LDP Toys with a Return to 1954	257
Rodney W. Jones	Ballistic Missile Submarines and Arms Control in the Indian Ocean	269
Raju G. C. Thomas	The Armed Services and the Indian Defense Budget	280
Francis J. Romance	Modernization of China's Armed Forces	298
Sidney R. Jones	"It Can't Happen Here": A Post-Khomeini Look at Indonesian Islam	311
Leon Hollerman	Disintegrative versus Integrative Aspects of Interdependence: The Japanese Case	324

THE ETHNIC FACTOR IN SOVIET-AFGHAN RELATIONS

Eden Naby*

NATIONAL IDENTITY is a critical issue for many third world countries whose frontiers have been contoured not through a natural process but as a direct result of invading colonial armies or colonial pressure. The boundaries of many Middle Eastern countries and those of the southern part of the Soviet Union exist in defiance of any ethnic, linguistic, or cultural logic. Often the political boundaries even defy the concept of militarily defensible frontiers.

The descendants of Tsarist, British, and French colonialists, having agreed among themselves that national states should exist within the designated areas, wonder at the lack of cohesive national loyalty toward a central government. Or they attempt to manipulate ethnic diversity against the central government in order to gain concessions in economic or political spheres. Examples of such manipulation are the Soviet involvement with Kurdish and Azeri ethnic groups in the Iran of the 1940s or the American involvement (through surrogates) in the Kurdish autonomy moves in Iraq during the 1960s. A third example may emerge more clearly from the Soviet action among Turkic and Iranian shared ethnic groups in Afghanistan. This situation, to be explored here on the basis of Kabul's declarations and actions during the first twenty months (April 1978 to December 1979) of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, may offer the Soviets their first opportunity to demonstrate the extent to which they plan to subjugate Muslim ethnic groups.

Since the pro-Soviet coup of April 27-28, 1978, Kabul's policy to-

* The background material for this article was gathered during a research trip to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Soviet Central Asia in the winter of 1979. It is also based on ideas subsequently gathered during the course of lectures the author delivered at Oxford University and the Asia Society (New York) during the same year.

ward its ethnic minorities has departed sharply from the pattern observable in most Middle Eastern countries faced with heterogeneous populations. In most Middle Eastern countries the pattern has been to ignore or suppress Muslim ethnic minorities. Constitutionally, the smaller non-Muslim minorities have received more consideration than the larger Muslim ethnic minorities who have had no avenues open to them for perpetuating their languages, literatures, or cultures. Unlike religious minorities, they do not have rights for ethnic political representation.¹ Therefore, Kabul's new policy, announced during the summer following the 1978 coup, may prove to be important for all the Middle East. In May 1978, the head of government, Nur Mohammad Taraki, announced his government's intent to revise the existing pattern in favor of a scheme based on the Soviet nationality policy model.²

Given the ethnic diversity and conflict within most Middle Eastern states and the magnitude of the influence of Soviet ideological and military pressure in this region, a study of the Afghan adaptation of Soviet policy becomes imperative. Whatever Afghanistan's future relationship to the Soviet Union may be, its declaration of a positive nationality policy will have far-reaching effects in neighboring countries. The effects will be greater still because the same Turkmens, Baluchis, and others to whom Afghanistan proposes a measure of autonomy overlap into Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Pakistan.³

Afghan Ethnic Diversity

Since the formulation of its nationality policy during the early 1920s, the USSR has divided former Tsarist Muslim colonies in Central Asia into five basic units based mainly on ethno-linguistic affinity. These units have many of the institutions of the sovereign countries they are supposed to be except military and foreign policy institutions. Each unit, a union republic, is run in name if not in reality by the major ethnic group whose name it bears: thus Uzbekistan is run by Uzbeks, Turkmenistan by Turkmens, Tajikistan by Tajiks, and so forth. Playing down the fact that ethnic Russians or Slavs actually administer most ethnic Muslim institutions in these Soviet republics, the Russians have

¹ Eden Naby, "The Iranian Frontier Nationalities: The Kurds, the Assyrians, the Baluchis, and the Turkmens," in William O. McCagg, Jr. and Brian Silver, eds., *Soviet Asian Ethnic Frontiers* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), pp. 83-116.

² Among statements broadcast and published about the new nationality policy was the following, appearing as a large banner during the International Kushan Conference (Kabul, November 1978): "Creation of a progressive national cultural system and in the first step ensuring of conditions essential for evolution of art and literature, education and publication in the mother tongues of tribes and nationalities resident in Afghanistan."

³ Turkmens in Iraq and Turkey have been relatively silent. Cultural considerations have been made for them in Iraq. See Eden Naby, "The Turkmens of the Middle East," in Georgina Ashworth, ed., *World Minorities* (Sunbury, UK: Quartermaine House Ltd., 1978), pp. 132-136.

been able
sirable n
see it as
governm
without
tionality

No
clusively
ans to th
Every et
ders of t
range, v
Uzbeks,
dition, F
ally inh
tions of

In t
speakers
Iran as v
English,
language
ences lie
cultural
Soviet U
influence
of the Ir
Khomein
Muslim
which d

In t
the wor
these th
ization l
sardars (f
few dec
Baluchs
ern ethn
does not

4 For
problems
of Soviet
alism' in
13.

5 Iran
Iranian c
ing to di
York Tin

V

2

0

/

3

M

R

8

0

UMI

been able to represent this system to deal with ethnic diversity as a desirable model to be emulated.⁴ It appeals to minority ethnic groups who see it as means of perpetuating their cultures but it also attracts some governments who see it as a successful way of defusing ethnic unrest without foregoing centralization of power. Converts to the Soviet nationality policy system include Yugoslavia and, more recently, Iraq.

No ethnic group in Afghanistan lives in or inhabits Afghanistan exclusively. None but the Pashtuns (Afghans in Soviet terminology, Pathans to the Indians), claim Afghanistan as their chief area of habitation. Every ethnic group in Afghanistan has co-ethnics living across the borders of the country. The groups living to the north of the Hindu Kush range, which divides the country from east to west, are Turkmens, Uzbeks, and Kirghiz, all speaking Turkic languages and dialects. In addition, Persian speakers—Tajiks and other ethnics—have also traditionally inhabited this region. All of these groups have large or major portions of their world populations located within the Soviet Union.

In the west, Afghanistan serves as home for Persian and Turkmen speakers. Both the Turkmens and the Tajiks reside across the border in Iran as well. The language referred to as Tajiki, Farsi, and Dari may, in English, be called Persian since, except for a few variations, the literary language is the same under all three local designations. The chief differences lie in the spoken and especially rural colloquial forms. Therefore, culturally, several Afghan ethnic groups overlap into Iran as well as the Soviet Union. The Persian speakers of Afghanistan have been very much influenced by Iranian media, particularly those who, like the majority of the Iranians, profess Shi'ism. But since post-revolutionary Iran under Khomeini has refused to develop any constitutional means allowing for Muslim ethnic diversity, the Soviet model remains the primary one to which dissatisfied groups may look.⁵

In the south and the east of Afghanistan live the major portion of the world's Pashtuns together with Brahuis and Baluchs. In the past these three groups have been organized along tribal lines but this organization has lost much of its impact, especially among the Baluchs, whose *sardars* (chiefs) have been neutralized in Iran and Pakistan over the past few decades. With the exception of insignificant immigrant pockets of Baluchs and Pashtuns living in the Turkmen SSR, none of these southern ethnic groups of Afghanistan overlap into the Soviet Union. This does not mean, however, that these groups have been immune to Soviet

⁴ For a discussion of the adaptation of the Soviet nationality model to Kurdish problems in Iraq, see Eden Naby, "The Iranian Frontier Nationalities." A defense of Soviet nationality policy recently appeared in *Pravda*. See "West's view of 'Nationalism' in USSR hit," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, XXXI:30 (1979), pp. 12-13.

⁵ Iranian Finance Minister Ab'ul Hassan Bani Sadr, while approving the new Iranian constitution's disregard of ethnic autonomy, blasted the USSR for attempting to divide Iran into small ethnic parts in order to conquer it piecemeal. *New York Times*, January 18, 1980.

suaded Afghanistan to withdraw from the fray by offering it access to the sea through Iran. In view of Iran's current anti-Soviet stand and its alarm over the pro-Soviet Kabul regime, it is unlikely that the offer of access to Chahbahar will be renewed. Therefore, the Baluchistan port of Gwadar remains the best Soviet-Afghan hope for a port on the Arabian Sea. Thus the choice of Baluch as an Afghan nationality. The larger Brahui ethnic group has neither a large world population nor viable territorial claims that would be useful to either Afghanistan or the Soviet Union.

The Nuristanis have been a problem for the pro-Soviet regimes since 1978 just as they were for previous Afghan governments. They are currently engaged in fighting Kabul and were the first to throw off the yoke of the pro-Soviet Taraki regime. As a result they have suffered bombing and loss of lives and villages. Although a relatively small group within Afghanistan, Nuristani related groups in Pakistan inhabit the areas through which China and Pakistan communicate. Despite this strategic importance of the Nuristanis, it would appear that for the time being Kabul has abandoned hopes of cultivating them. Aside from one of Taraki's speeches published in Nuristani, Kabul ignores Nuristani culture.²¹

Another group ignored by the Soviet-Afghan nationality scheme is the Hazaras, the major Shi'ite Muslim group in Afghanistan.²² Soviet advisers in Kabul assert that the Hazaras are a prime example of an ethnic group that, because of unalleviated oppression, has lost its identity. No Afghan or Hazara would agree with this since Hazaras have maintained not only their own cultural patterns and their own territory, but also a distinct dialect of Persian called Hazaragi. The lack of recognition of Hazaras stems rather from several political factors: first, the Hazaras have kept aloof or rebelled against the pro-Soviet regimes in Kabul; second, since the increased Shi'ite success in the Muslim world, the Hazaras have become emboldened to run their affairs independently of Kabul; third, the Hazaras are located along the central spine of the country and have very limited overlap into Iran. Therefore, the Hazaras would prove truculent as a pampered nationality and Hazara culture would serve little regional propaganda purpose.

Thus although Afghanistan has many ethnic groups of varying sizes, the choices of which nationalities to cultivate has been based on political rather than cultural or demographic factors. Cultural politics was the basis for the creation of Soviet Central Asian nationalities and it serves as the reason in Afghanistan as well. Moscow in tandem with

²¹ This single and unique Nuristani language publication is called "Afghanistan Demokratik Jumhuriyetch Inqilabi Kudiya ma Mamayal" (Kabul: Dowlati Matba'ah, 1978). The format is small (9½ x 12½ cm.) and runs to only 21 pages.

²² Following his arrival in Kabul as head of the Afghan government in December 1979, Babrak Karmal has made special overtures to Hazaras. In addition to other recently privileged minorities according to a Tass report, FBIS (Soviet Union), December 28, 1979, p. D1.

Kabul is :
impact in
tionality
neighbor

Ethnic Pa

In di
Afghanist
ministrati
control, le
Which bri
little diffe
months af
Soviet adv
petent or
creased. M
in their t
men willi
sive Soviet
tern is em
ity progra

Durit
nationalit
pation, ed
ticipation,
of the cab
Hakim Sh
General. I
governme
Turkmen
with any
had vigor
ized comm
raphy and
generally
remains to
take the s

Form
the govern

²³ Desc
pleted the
by Louis D
have either
their taking
20, 1980.

²⁴ The

V
2
0
/
3
M
R
8
0
UMI

Kabul is attempting to foster groups that would have future political impact in the region. In the meantime, the adaptation of the Soviet nationality model in Afghanistan can be used to feed ethnic demands in neighboring countries where a vacuum exists regarding ethnic policy.

Ethnic Participation in Government

In discussing the adaptation of the Soviet nationality model to Afghanistan, we must remember that this is but one of the Soviet administrative models attractive to Kabul. Many other models for tourism control, learned academies, collectives, etc., are under consideration. Which branch of the Khalq party is in control of the ministries makes little difference to the adoption of these models, because, from the first months after the 1978 coup, many of the ministries have been staffed by Soviet advisers. With each purge and coup, the number of Afghans competent or prepared to make decisions or run the government has decreased. Ministers in their thirties will have to be replaced by ministers in their twenties. In the military, the decrease in Afghan officers and men willing to back the Kabul regime was a factor that led to the massive Soviet invasion.²³ In the running of civilian agencies, a similar pattern is emerging, and many Soviets are also administering the nationality programs.

During the first twenty months after its introduction in 1978, the nationality policy was implemented in four areas—government participation, education, newspapers, and culture. The first, government participation, has not been formalized although the chief Turkic member of the cabinets for the past twenty months, an Uzbek poet named Abdul Hakim Shara'i Jauzjani, had served as Minister of Justice and Attorney General. With the shift in power in late 1979, he was replaced as the government's token Turkic member by Mohammad Khan Jalaler, a Turkmen with long ties to the past regimes and no apparent connection with any pro-Soviet parties. Jauzjani, an active Khalq party member, had vigorously promoted Turkmen and Uzbek advancement. He organized committees to study the unification of Uzbek and Turkmen orthography and language, wrote extensive verse with political orientation, and generally headed the effort to promote Turkic language cultures.²⁴ It remains to be seen whether Jalaler, a member of a wealthy family, will take the same initiatives on behalf of the nationality policy.

Formal representation by the nationalities or quota membership in the government, centrally or regionally, has not yet taken shape. Nor has

²³ Desertions from the Afghan armed forces by both recruits and officers depleted the Afghan army from 90,000 to 50,000, according to some estimates. (Lecture by Louis Dupree at Brown University, September 24, 1979). The remaining troops have either been disarmed or given a restricted amount of ammunition to avoid their taking weapons and ammunition to the insurgents. *The Sunday Times*, January 20, 1980.

²⁴ *The Kabul Times*, February 1, 1979, p. 1.

the question of territoriality' been raised publicly. Despite the token minorities on the cabinets or in lower ministerial posts, the dominant ethnic group in all cabinets and offices have been Pashtuns.²⁵ The major ethnic shift in government personnel has been in the Pashtu faction taking the leadership: Taraki belonged to the Ghilzai confederation of Pashtuns, which has been in traditional rivalry with the Pashtun faction that has provided most Afghan kings and rulers. Both Taraki and Hafizullah Amin pressed for the use of Pashtu, the language in which they gave public addresses. Babrak Karmal, their replacement, seems to prefer Persian, indicative of his urban, intellectual background.

Opposition to the strong Pashtun domination of the country and to the prominence of the Pashtunistan issue as a force in foreign policy has existed for a number of years. The Pashtunistan issue complicated relations with Pakistan.²⁶ During the early 1970s, and some years before, the Setame Milli (National Oppression) organization, drawing from members of leftist political parties (both pro-Soviet and pro-Maoist), became active in opposing Pashtun domination. Although the group included some Pashtun intellectuals, most of its membership came from Turkic and Persian speaking minorities. By creating cultural avenues for ethnic minority expression while allowing some non-Pashtuns into important government positions, the pro-Soviet regimes have attempted to defuse opposition that, left to itself, could have taken a pro-Chinese stance. On a small scale, there may have been in Afghanistan signs of the contending nationality policies of the Chinese and the Russians.²⁷

At the same time that the government in Kabul has been taking steps to include token ethnic minorities, the insurgents have appeared little concerned about currying favor with these groups. It is true that the major Turkic minorities, located in northern Afghanistan, are logistically ill-placed to offer resistance in support of the southern Pashtuns. In Badakhshan and in the Panjshir valley, as in the Hazarajat, sporadic resistance has occurred. Nevertheless, the main resistance groups to the south have been slow to recognize the importance of accepting and attracting the ethnic minorities. A token gesture was made during the summer of 1979 when the insurgents' radio station commenced programs in Turkic, in addition to the regular Pashtu and Persian. No evidence exists yet for written dissident literature in Turkic. Most dissident

²⁵ Under the communist regimes, the requirement that Pashtu be studied by all government employees has been dropped. However, this has not decreased the use of Pashtu because, more than ever, the government bureaucracy has been staffed with native Pashtu speakers, often the first generation in their families to be literate. (Based on observations by the author during the winter of 1979.)

²⁶ Afghanistan has maintained since the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 that the Pashtuns living in Pakistan (i.e., Pakhtunistan) should be allowed to decide their own political status through a plebiscite. Pakistan's objection to this resulted in a hostile relationship.

²⁷ China's western province of Sinkiang is inhabited by significant communities of Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and smaller groups of Tajiks as well as Uighurs. Chinese nationality policy has not been as aggressively implemented or exported as that of the Soviet Union.

literature that lang
Igno
groups, e
all factio
the Russ
Asian inc
ethnic pr
of ethnic
Soviet R
the Afgh
tor. If th
ernment
Turkic a

Impleme

The
to imple
guage, a
ethnic r
rulers. I
ple, how
some bic
qara and
lished ir
these w
ognition
munitie
through
were occ
Contem
stricted.
through

On
lished u
for pub
Balkh.
organ, a
to expr
other ii
minorit
Neverth

28 E
VII:3 (Ju
29 Sc

V

2

0

/

3

M

R

8

0

UMI

literature appears in Persian, reflecting the interethnic importance of that language.²⁸

Ignoring minority groups is a frequently repeated mistake of ruling groups, even when they are in a defensive posture and require help from all factions. Two examples in recent history are the White forces during the Russian civil war and the anti-Soviet Basmachi fighters for Central Asian independence from Russia during the 1920s. Russian and Uzbek ethnic pride respectively prevented these groups from soliciting the aid of ethnic minorities by developing an equitable nationality plan. The Soviet Russians know this lesson well, but it remains to be seen whether the Afghans, pro- and anti-Soviet, will know how to use the ethnic factor. If the insurgents have an opportunity to establish a provisional government in exile, it would be foolhardy not to include members of Turkic and Persian speaking groups.

Implementing the Afghan Nationality Policy

The most important of the initial steps taken by the Kabul regime to implement its nationality policy were in the areas of education, language, and culture. Prior to 1978, no publication of materials in the ethnic minority languages of Afghanistan had been permitted by former rulers. In partial recognition of the cultural heritage of the Turkic people, however, former governments had acquiesced to the publication of some biographies of Turkic literary figures such as Sultan Hussein Bayqara and Mir Ali Shir Nava'i. But apart from a few lines of poetry published in the original Chagatay language in which they were composed, these works were written and published in Persian. Such restricted recognition of Turkic culture was supplemented within the Turkic communities by poorly lithographed editions of Turkic literature available through Pakistan. These materials, generally of a religio-mystic nature, were occasionally available in book shops in Mazar-i Sharif and Balkh.²⁹ Contemporary Uzbek or Turkmen writing, however, was severely restricted. Even the "Turki" culture briefly allowed under Dauod existed through the radio only.

One Uzbek poet, who in 1979 was editor of the Uzbek weekly published under the auspices of the Khalq party, relates being reprimanded for publishing a short lyrical Uzbek poem in the literary magazine called *Balkh*. He lost his job for this infraction of the law. The Khalq party organ, also called *Khalq*, however, as early as 1964 had allowed Uzbeks to express themselves in its pages in their mother tongue. There are other indications that the party had in fact commenced planning its minority language policy long before it finally came to power in 1978. Nevertheless, because of the negligence or outright suppression of na-

²⁸ Eden Naby, "Afghan Dissent Literature," *Afghanistan Council Newsletter* VII:3 (June 1979), p. 37-38.

²⁹ Some sample titles are *Sūfi Allahyār* and *Bā Amīr Hātim Sahābah*.

the Afghans into tying their economy, through barter agreements for non-military goods, with that of the Soviet Union.³¹

Eventually not only were officers sent to the Soviet Union but also engineers, doctors, filmmakers, and other specialists. Many of these persons, particularly those in the humanities and arts, spent many years in the Muslim republics of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. In turn, more and more of the Soviet experts sent to Afghanistan came from these republics. The large number of Soviet Muslims first drew attention when it was realized how difficult it would be to tell a Soviet Uzbek and an Afghan Uzbek apart if the intent of the former was to disguise his citizenship. The question was critical to the composition of the invasion force the Kremlin sent into Afghanistan at the end of 1979.³²

Soviet advisers in Afghanistan have expended more effort in learning about the country and people than have most western advisers. The Soviets have adhered to modest living conditions in the country, thus, projecting an image of equality rather than superiority to Afghans. They have not had Afghan servants, nor have they had access to social elites, and are thus forced into contacts with their co-workers and with the middle classes. Because they have not acted or been treated like elites, they have had to learn the Persian language at least to a degree that would allow them to live and function in Afghanistan. In fact, many Russian and other Soviet advisers over the years have lived very much the way that Peace Corps volunteers have lived. While this has not necessarily made them popular, it has provided many of them with a deeper understanding of the country, the people, and their problems.

This description applies to most Soviet citizens in Afghanistan but it was the ethnic minorities that the USSR shared with Afghanistan that succeeded best in merging into the local culture. Soviet Muslims serve at the Kabul embassy and many have had wide experience in other Soviet embassies throughout the Muslim world. In addition to Persian, a number have learned Turkish (of Turkey) and Arabic from one or two Middle Eastern countries. One Azeri woman had even made the pilgrimage to Mecca in her capacity as an interpreter for a Soviet Muslim. Perhaps the seriousness with which the Kremlin regards the role of Soviet Muslim ethnic minorities in its relationship with the Middle East may be demonstrated by the fact that the current Soviet ambassadors in Kabul and Islamabad both come from Muslim backgrounds.³³ Moreover, they

³¹ Arthur Paul, "Constraints on the Afghan Economy," *Asian Journal*, No. 29 (1973), pp. 1-15.

³² Several reports have been published giving breakdowns of the composition of Soviet invasion troops. J. Dorsey reported 40% Tajiks, 25% Uzbekistan, 25% Turkmenistan, 10% European Russia. *Christian Science Monitor*, January 10, 1980. But it is not clear whether the percentages represent ethnic Tajiks, etc., or whether the units had been stationed in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and so forth as part of the Turkistan and Central Asian Military district armies. *Radio Liberty Research Bulletin* (January 18, 1980).

³³ Sarvar Alimzhanovich Azimoy, a Central Asian, has been the Soviet ambas-

are not Foreign
Party position
arrived only
is a Tatar. H
would be ad
Soviet image
are not suppr
and communi

Shared et
ganda purpos
institutions de
advisers, like
the first twent
theless, it is a
military advis
all the minist
tural fields. T
be that mem
military opera

Indication
long been inv
ing the nation
before written
Soviet adviser
alphabet had
working on th
ment of schoo
pated before
lousy adapting
the first Uzbek
followed close
matter—i.e.,
Democratic R
While most o
the dedicated
pated in its p

The high
is particularly

sador to Pakistan
Soviet ambassa
Volga Tatar, Fil

³⁴ Rather th
is a communist
Muslim relations
Group and Chai
is also currently

³⁵ The read
The adviser is u

are not Foreign Ministry officers but men who have high Communist Party positions in the CPSU.²⁴ The Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan arrived only weeks before the invasion in December. By background, he is a Tatar. His name identifies him as a Muslim and presumably he would be admirably suited to demonstrate two points crucial to the Soviet image in Afghanistan and the Middle East: that Soviet Muslims are not suppressed but are elevated to high positions; and that Islam and communism are compatible.

Shared ethnic minorities sent to Afghanistan serve the same propaganda purpose together with fostering the growth of nascent minority institutions decreed by the government in Kabul. The number of ethnic advisers, like the total number of Soviet advisers in Afghanistan during the first twenty months of the communist regime, is not known. Nevertheless, it is assumed that they act as interpreters for Russian or Slavic military advisers to the Afghan army, serve as interpreters or experts in all the ministries, and that they are training ethnic cadres in the cultural fields. The perception of Soviet Central Asians themselves seems to be that members of Soviet Muslim minorities were not involved in military operations prior to the invasion.

Indications are that ethnic personnel from the Soviet Union have long been involved with the local Afghan pro-Soviet groups in developing the nationality policy. For example, the Nuristani language, never before written, appeared in print only some months after the 1978 coup. Soviet advisers who were questioned about the speed with which an alphabet had been adapted to the language replied that they had been working on the problem for many years. In the same way, the development of school books in ethnic languages appears to have been anticipated before the coup. By the fall of 1978, Soviet Uzbek advisers were busy adapting Soviet Uzbek grade books to Afghan needs. In six months, the first Uzbek reader for Afghan Uzbeks was ready for publication. It followed closely the format of Soviet books and contained ideological matter—i.e., pictures of Nur Mohammad Taraki, the red flag of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and banners throughout the work. While most of the responsibility and credit for this reader belongs to the dedicated Soviet Uzbek adviser, a number of Afghan Uzbeks participated in its preparation, notably the artists who drew the pictures.²⁵

The high level of activity by Soviet advisers among Afghan Uzbeks is particularly striking. Although Soviet Russians living in Central Asia

sador to Pakistan since 1974. When Hafizullah Amin forced the replacement of the Soviet ambassador in Kabul during the fall of 1979, the new ambassador was a Volga Tatar, Fikryat A. Tabeyev.

²⁴ Rather than being affiliated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tabeyev is a communist party functionary, with impressive credentials in the field of Soviet-Muslim relations—Chairman of the Soviet-Arab section of the USSR Parliamentary Group and Chairman of the Group for Solidarity with Asian-African Countries. He is also currently a member of the 270-man Central Committee of the CPSU.

²⁵ The reader is called *ALIFBA: Biricht sinif uchun darsi kitab* (Kabul, 1979). The adviser is the Soviet Uzbek scholar, Dr. Arif Uthman(ov).

reements for

nion but also
any of these
it many years
zerbaijan. In
anistan came
ns first drew
tell a Soviet
ormer was to
mposition of
t the end of

fort in learn-
adrs. The
country, thus
fghans. They
social elites,
and with the
ed like elites,
a degree that
n fact, many
ed very much
this has not
them with a
eir problems.
ghanistan but
ghanistan that
islms serve at
a other Soviet
rsian, a num-
e or two Mid-
he pilgrimage
slim. Perhaps
f Soviet Mus-
Ea may be
lors in Kabul
foreover, they

Journal, No. 29

e composition of
stan, 25% Turk-
10, 1980. But it
or whether the
art of the Turk-
research Bulletin

ie Soviet ambas-

may make public statements about the lack of nationalist consciousness among Muslim Central Asians, evidence from the Central Asians themselves belies this assertion.⁸⁶ Among Soviet Central Asian advisers in Afghanistan, it is very clear that a good measure of the motivation to work in Afghanistan comes from a desire to "help the oppressed Uzbek brothers in Afghanistan." Aside from any ideological intentions, the Soviet Central Asians working in the cultural field are driven by a wish to bring the Uzbeks of Afghanistan to their own cultural level, and to add them to the world body of Uzbeks. This pride in being Uzbeks will work to the advantage of the Soviet Union in the short run because it will offset the antipathy toward the Soviet Union as a *dar ul harb* (place of war)—an atheistic state.

Playing on these developing ethnic inducements, Babrak Karmal, the third Afghan President since the coup of 1978, mentioned the nationalities of Afghanistan specifically early in his first speech.⁸⁷ During the second week of his term, he emphasized the equal role of all Afghan ethnic groups: "From the viewpoint of state structure the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is based on the equality and free and voluntary union of all the fraternal nations and tribes inhabiting the united common motherland."⁸⁸ This statement is reminiscent of Soviet remarks made in attempts to win the allegiance of Tsarist Muslims during the Civil War and in the 1920s.

Even with the change in leadership in Kabul, it would appear that the nationality policy adopted by the Khalq party will remain as part of the overall policy of succeeding governments that are under Moscow's tutelage. Soviet ethnic Muslims will also probably continue to play an important role in binding Afghan ethnic groups to Soviet co-ethnics. Given the greater number of Uzbeks and Turkmens living in the Soviet Union as compared with Afghanistan, the influences will probably all be from north to south. But it would be imprudent for the Soviet Union and others to discount the possibility of changes wrought among Soviet Central Asians as a result of contact with Afghans. Certain subtle changes among Uzbek Soviets in Kabul have already become evident. The dropping of the Russian -ov at the end of surnames may be the first of such changes yet to become manifest.

Soviet Options in Afghanistan

Soviet options in Afghanistan are not dictated by ethnic consider-

⁸⁶ Russian archeologists visiting the West claim that, unlike Iranians, Pakistanis, and other Middle Easterners, Soviet Central Asians do not experience national pride upon unearthing remains indicating a rich cultural heritage because "We do not think of nationalism in the same way in the USSR." Soviet Central Asians themselves deny this and speak of jockeying by the various nationalities to lay claim to archeological finds in order to enhance their particular culture and national heritage.

⁸⁷ *FBIS* (Soviet Union), December 28, 1979, p. D1.

⁸⁸ *Pravda* December 31, 1979, p. 4, translated in *FBIS* reports (Soviet Union), January 3, 1980, p. D5.

ations.
Among
own la
in adjo
tion is
to reco
and K
the Af
dicativ
Gi
security
Afghan
ranging
Fi
regime
gether
liance.

Se
forces,

st consciousness
al Asians them-
sian advisers in
e motivation to
ppressed Uzbek
intentions, the
driven by a wish
ral level, and to
ing Uzbeks will
t run because it
ir ul harb (place

Babrak Karmal,
entified the na-
pet. 1.87 During
le of all Afghan
the Democratic
e and voluntary
the united com-
Soviet remarks
slims during the

ould appear that
l remain as part
under Moscow's
tinue to play an
oviet co-ethnics.
ing in the Soviet
vill probably all
he Soviet Union
ht among Soviet
. Certain subtle
become evident.
mes may be the

ethnic consider-

ike Iranians, Pakis-
experience national
ge because "We do
entral Asians them-
ities to lay claim to
id national heritage.

orts (Soviet Union),

ations but rather by perceived security and strategic requirements. Among the requirements is the necessity to assure the allegiance of their own large Muslim population in the face of rising Muslim assertiveness in adjoining Iran and Afghanistan. The validity of this Soviet motivation is generally denied by those in the West who have always refused to recognize the potential for Islam as a political force, but Moscow's and Kabul's elaborate statements aimed at assuring Muslim states that the Afghan crisis does not indicate Soviet animosity toward Islam is indicative of the political importance of Islam.

Given the Soviets' recognition of Islamic politics, together with security and strategic considerations, what are Moscow's options in the Afghanistan crisis? The options may be divided into five broad scenarios, ranging from the most harmful to the most advantageous to Moscow.

First, the Afghan resistance succeeds in overthrowing the pro-Soviet regime, the Soviet army is induced to withdraw, and Afghanistan, together with Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey, forms a regional defensive alliance. The chances for this outcome are dependent upon the following:

- (1) Soviet willingness to see a "socialist" state slip out of its sphere of influence. This would set a poor precedent for Moscow's Communist allies in Europe and Asia. A strong, progressive Muslim belt around the southern part of the USSR might provide an incentive for the Soviet Muslims to become more assertive.
- (2) The availability of outside sources of aid (military, political, and humanitarian) to the Afghan resistance, which cannot afford to risk taking direct military help from a superpower without alienating potential supporters. Military help should be channelled through other sources since both China and the United States are suspect.
- (3) The formation of a provisional government in exile (like that of de Gaulle during World War II) under a single leader or collective leadership. This government must be able to produce a program for progress and development in order to attract supporters from disaffected urbanites, the military, and peasants as well as ethnic groups. The chaotic conditions in Iran following the revolution have served as a poor example to those advocating popular revolution.
- (4) Finding capable, popular leaders from among Afghan resisters. The promising leadership that was emerging in the 1960s has been killed off by successive regimes since 1978. Resistance fighting has suffered for lack of leadership and unity since the 1978 coup.
- (5) The ability of Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan to form politically stable governments in order to accommodate disintegrative forces within their territories. Ethnic problems in the region can only be solved through the cooperation of existing states.

Second, the Soviets reach an accommodation with the resistance forces, withdraw from the country, and allow the formation of a coali-

tion government friendly to the USSR but practicing nonalignment in foreign policy. The chances for this outcome are dependent on the following:

- (1) Anxiety in the Soviet Union over exacerbating relations with Muslim countries (and internal Muslims) by allowing itself to become an anti-Muslim colonial power. This process has already begun but is complicated by the similar image that the United States has acquired among Muslims as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iranian crisis.
- (2) The willingness of the Afghans to agree on a coalition government including leftists and rightists, and to become friends with the Soviet Union despite the invasion of the country. At least one Afghan resistance leader, a moderate, broadcast such a call to the Soviet Union, but this came during the summer of 1979—i.e., before the invasion.³⁹

Third, a long, bloody, and costly guerrilla war continuing with much damage to Moscow's relations with the third world. One resolution of such a war might be the division of Afghanistan. The Soviets could either annex the area to the north of the Hindu Kush, absorbing the Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Turkmens into appropriate Soviet republics, or they could retain North Afghanistan as a satellite for future use. This option is dependent on the following:

- (1) The willingness of the world community to allow the precedent of redrawing an international border along ethnic lines. This precedent would be seen as potentially dangerous, or at least disruptive in Iran, Turkey, and other Asian, African, and European states.
- (2) Soviet willingness to forego, for the time being at least, the objective of a port on the Arabian Sea. The acquisition of North Afghanistan would not warrant the steps the Soviet Union have already taken to secure all of the country.

Fourth, the Soviet Union, encountering only token opposition from the rest of the world, pours the military force into Afghanistan required to crush all resistance within a few months. The use of chemical weapons could be supplemented by biological weapons in a move that would decimate the Afghan population.⁴⁰ Those Afghans left alive

³⁹ Sayed Ahmad Gailani's message broadcast from Peshawar as reported by Louis Dupree in his lecture at Brown University on September 24, 1979. Even after the invasion, Gailani, a moderate guerrilla leader, stated that "As far as the Islamic National Front [his party] is concerned, we are fully aware of the sensitive character of the Afghan geo-political situation and to that end we shall strive to maintain friendly relations with all countries of the world." Statement issued in Peshawar, December 30, 1979.

⁴⁰ Recent reports that Soviet army units are supplied with detoxification facilities, implying Soviet readiness to use chemical and biological weapons against the Afghans, have been received with incredulity by some in the West. This disbelief in

would be
was open
crowded
without f
Asia. Usi
Pakistan
chances of

(1)

(2)

Final
the futilit
volving S
istan, the
calls it in
following:

(1)

(2)

Varia
that Afgh
have been
advantage.

the extent
has led som
New York 7

⁴¹ In 19
Soviet imag
mentary on
guages: Aral
tional and
the Soviet s
These are at
friend and i

⁴² Ayat
goes back to
the Afghan
has clouded

V

2

0

/

3

M

R

8

0

UMI

would be placed in the government as figureheads, while the country was opened to immigration by Soviet Central Asians and Slavs. Overcrowded rural conditions in Soviet Central Asia could thus be alleviated without forcing the Uzbeks, Tajiks, and others to move outside Central Asia. Using Afghan ethnic groups as justification, parts of Iran and Pakistan would be broken off and digested into the Soviet sphere. The chances of this outcome depend on the following:

- (1) The extent to which the West is capable of unified resistance to Soviet aggression and the propaganda used to justify aggression.
- (2) The collapse of Pakistan and Iran because of internal disintegration.

Finally, the Soviet Union convinces Afghan resistance fighters of the futility of opposition and induces them to withdraw without involving Soviet armies in further fighting. Having stabilized Afghanistan, the Soviet army turns its attention to Iran where a puppet regime calls it into the country. The chances for this option depend on the following:

- (1) Disunity among the Afghan resistance coupled with apathy in the rest of the world.
- (2) Soviet ability to demonstrate to Afghans (and by example to Iranians and other Muslims) that Muslim values can be merged with socialism as practiced by the Soviet Union. This is a long range goal which the Soviet Union began vigorously implementing shortly after the Arab-Israeli war of 1967.⁴¹ The only creditable and active repudiation of this propaganda has come from revolutionary Iran but Iran's voice has been drowned out by the din of its revolution.⁴²

Variations on these five basic options are also possible. The fact that Afghanistan is composed of many ethnic groups, most of which have been indifferently treated by previous regimes, works to the Soviet advantage. That all of these groups, up to 99% of the country, remain

the extent to which the Soviets are prepared to go to eliminate Afghan opposition has led some to excuse the presence of detoxification units as a "bureaucratic error." *New York Times* (January 5, 1980), p. 3.

⁴¹ In 1968, several publications appeared in the USSR intended to improve the Soviet image among Muslims. Among these were a printing of the Koran, a commentary on it, and a journal about Soviet Islam published chiefly in external languages: Arabic, French, and English. Improvement and expansion of Muslim educational and worship facilities has followed together with efforts to make Tashkent, the Soviet site of Muslim institutions, the locus of African and Asian gatherings. These are among the steps taken to encourage Muslims to perceive the USSR as their friend and the U.S. as their enemy.

⁴² Ayatollah Khomeini's condemnation of Russian meddling in Afghanistan goes back to June 1979. Iran has persisted in its support, moral and financial, for the Afghan insurgency. But its equally vociferous condemnation of the United States has clouded the West's perception of Iran's anti-Soviet stance.

attached to Muslim values and traditions may give Afghanistan the chance it needs to demonstrate the resiliency of ideals over arms. Whatever the outcome of the events put into motion by the April 1978 coup, the necessity of formulating and implementing a policy to deal with ethnic diversity remains. States with artificial boundaries like Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkey must find joint or individual solutions to the ethnic problem before a foreign-induced crisis forces alien solutions upon them.

EDEN NABY is an Associate at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

V

2

0

/

3

M

R

8

0

UMI